

Message Text

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44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /026 W

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O 181413Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3715

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 15125

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, US

SUBJECT: KAGNEW FOUR

REF: A) ROME 14794, B) KHARTOUM 2406

1. COMMUNICATIONS REPORTED (REF A) WERE HANDED TO EMBASSY OCTOBER 18 BY MFA (RACHELE). HOWEVER, SOMEWHAT IN VARIANCE WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING FROM GOI (REF A) OF NATURE OF MATERIAL, WE HAVE BUT A SINGLE HANDWRITTEN, SEALED ENVELOPE, MARKED "PERSONAL" AND ADDRESSED TO "MR. TEKLA GHEBRESELLASIE, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE P.L.F. IN KHARTOUM". WRITING VISIBLE THROUGH ENVELOPE APPEARS TO BE TIGRINYA OR AMHARIC.
2. ACCORDING TO RACHELE, ENVELOPE COMES FROM SENIOR AND RESPECTED MEMBER IN CAIRO OF PLF POLITICAL FRONT (APPARENTLY WOLDE AB MARIAM) AND CONTAINS TWO LETTERS, ONE TO GHEBRESELLASIE AND ONE TO REPRESENTATIVE OF PLF MILITARY ORGANIZATION IN KHARTOUM. THEY ARE SAID TO CONTAIN AUTHORIZATION FOR PLF AUTHORITIES IN KHARTOUM TO ENTER INTO TALKS WITH US REPRESENTATIVES THERE OVER KAGNEW FOUR.
3. ACCORDING TO RACHELE,PLF INTENDS LETTER TO BE DELIVERED TO US REP VIA US EMBASSY KHARTOUM. THIS RATHER STRANGE MANEUVER, HE BELIEVES, MAY BE DESIGNED TO USE MORE SECURE US COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS AND, PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT, TO ESTABLISH IN ONE STROKE THE BONA FIDES OF BOTH SIDES IN KHARTOUM.

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4. RACHELE COMMENTED THAT EMBASSY KHARTOUM SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE IN LOCATING GHEBRESELLASIE, BUT THAT IF DIFFICULTY IS ENCOUNTERED ITALIAN EMBASSY THERE SHOULD BE ABLE TO HELP.

5. RACHELE ALSO INDICATED THAT ITALIAN EMBASSY IN CAIRO ANTICIPATES THAT UPCOMING TALKS WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT SINCE NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY MILITARY ORGANIZATION OF PLF AND NOT POLITICAL ARM. THIS ESTIMATE ACCORDS WITH THAT OF ANOTHER ELEMENT OF GOI.

6. SINCE DRAFTING FOREGOING, EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED TELEPHONIC AUTHORIZATION OF DEPARTMENT (S/CCT) TO FOREWARD ENVELOPE TO AMERICAN AMBASSADOR KHARTOUM VIA GOI POUCH. THIS IS MOST EXPEDITIOUS MEANS AVAILABLE. MFA HAS AGREED TO RE-OPEN POUCH LEAVING ROME TODAY AND ARRIVING ITALIAN EMBASSY KHARTOUM ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21. VOLPE

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